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LES BA-RONGA. Étude ethnographique sur les indigènes de la baie de Delagoa. — Droit coutumier. — Vie natale. — Industrie. — Traditions. — Superstitions et religion. Par HENRI A. JUNOD, missionnaire a Lourenço Marques. (Bulletin de la société neuchateloise de géographie, vol. x.) Neuchatel: 1898. Pp. 503.

It is curious that recent studies of African folk-life have been made especially by missionaries born in the little province of Neuchatel. The "Angola Folk-Tales" of Heli Chatelain, printed in 1894 by the American Folk-Lore Society, was the first publication which furnished a satisfactory inlook into the mental life of the West African. It was followed in 1895 by the "Contes populaires des Ba Souto" of E. Jacottet, and in 1897 by "Les chants et les contes des Ba-Ronga," by Rev. H. A. Junod, who now carries on his researches by the present admirable volume, dealing particularly with manners and customs of this South African tribe. Thus light is being thrown on African ethnography, which will shortly possess a literature as extensive as that which deals with American aborigines, and probably much more complete, seeing that investigation is easier and the material less transitory. It is devoutly to be wished that all English and American missionaries had as wide intelligence and complete an outfit of learning as these excellent men from Switzerland, who have comprehended what is here not yet generally appreciated, that it is important first to understand folk whom you desire to instruct.

This book might make the subject of reviews in many different relations. To certain of the more important features of African folk-life, on which light is thrown, it may be possible hereafter to return. In another place will be found an account of an important contribution, made by Mr. Junod, in furnishing an account of African divination. Equally valuable will be found many other investigations, social and economic, as well as literary and ethical.

The Ba-Ronga appear to be a folk of a straightforward and simple, rather than mystical, turn of mind. Mythology, so far as known, plays an unimportant part; the author has found no star-lore. Ancestor worship is the basis of the established religion; nature myths do not play an important part. Nevertheless, this deficiency is possibly modern; there are indications of the existence of beliefs concerning the heavenly bodies. Speculation as to origins scarcely figures; no cosmogony has been found. If a conjecture may be allowed, the writer of this notice would suggest that this deficiency by no means shows the non-existence of such speculative mythology, but merely that it belongs to the esoteric system.

W. W. N.

THE CORPUS CHRISTI FESTIVAL AT ST. MARY'S, PA.

The illustrations given on the following page relate to the article of Mr. Charles Burr Todd, published in the number for April-June, p. 126.